

Message Text

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LIMDIS

EUR FOR HARTMAN AND VINE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, CA

SUBJ: CONDITION IN CANADIAN ARCTIC

FOLLOWING ARE IMPRESSIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN CANADIAN ARCTIC TERRITORIES GAINED BY SEVEN-DAY TOUR SEPTEMBER 7-13. ROUTE WAS EDMONTON, FORT SMITH, YELLOWKNIFE, HAY RIVER, RESOLUTE, TUKTOYAKTUK, INUVIK, DAWSON CITY, WHITEHORSE, CARCROSS, FORT NELSON, EDMONTON. SUGGEST YOU PROVIDE DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC BUREAU WITH COPIES IN VIEW IMPLICATIONS BEARING ON THEIR AREAS OF INTEREST.

1. SEEMS CLEAR THAT CANADIAN PROBLEMS WITH INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND YUKON ARE MORE SERIOUS THAN WE IN OTTAWA REALIZED. ONE MANIFESTATION OF THIS WAS BOYCOTT BY INDIANS AND ESKIMOS OF RECEPTIONS AND DINNERS OFFERED BY CANADIAN TERRITORIAL REPS TO DIPLOMATIC REPS ON GOC-SPONSORED TOUR. OFFICIALS ALONG ROUTE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED TO ME THEIR CONSIDERABLE EMBARRASSMENT THAT BOYCOTT EVIDENT DURING TOUR. WHEN I INQUIRED WHETHER BOYCOTT WAS LIMITED TO OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS SET UP IN OUR HONOR, REPLIES INDICATED IT GENERAL IN NATURE AND IN EFFECT AMOUNTED TO INCREASING REFUSAL OF INDIGENOUS GROUPS TO COOPERATE WITH CANADIAN TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATIONS.

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2. MATTER CAME TO OUR ATTENTION BECAUSE OF REJECTION ON SEPTEMBER 10 BY MINISTER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BUCHANAN) OF THE "DENE MANIFESTO" IN WHICH INDIAN GROUPS DEMANDED SEPARATE AUTONOMOUS REGIME IN AREA COVERING 450,000 SQUARE MILES OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (TOTAL AREA NWT ESTIMATED AT 1.3 MILLION SQUARE MILES). MANY OF THEIR CLAIMS IN THIS RESPECT-- AND I INVITE YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS PARTICULARLY -- ARE GENERATED IN MACKENZIE VALLEY AREA. MANIFESTO DECLARED "WE HAVE BEEN MADE CANADIANS BY DECREE AND NOT BY OUR FREE CHOICE." ALSO, "PEOPLE SAY THE MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE IS DEVELOPMENT HIATUS BUT IT MIGHT DESTROY OUR WAY OF LIFE AS A NATION." (COMPLETE TEST BY POUCH). BUCHANAN FIRMLY REJECTED ALL THEIR POLITICAL DEMANDS AND STATEMENT, SAYING THEY CAUSING HIM "INCREASED CONCERN." (TEXT OF HIS DECLARATION BY SEPTEMBER.)

3. IN THE YUKON, MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATION SAID "INDIAN PROBLEMS" LIKE THOSE IN NWT DON'T EXIST BECAUSE NO TREATIES HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED WITH THE INDIANS. HOWEVER, NATIVE ELEMENTS ABSENCE FROM THE RECEPTION/DINNER GIVEN US AT WHITEHORSE WAS ATTRIBUTED BY CANADIAN OFFICIALS TO BUCHANAN STATEMENT.

4. REGIONAL PROBLEMS MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR CANADIAN RELUCTANCE TO HAVE GROUP MEET WITH NATIVE ELEMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE INVITED TO OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS MENTIONED ABOVE. AT FORT SMITH WE DID SEE PILOT EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS IN WHICH STUDENTS WERE GIVEN BASIC COURSES IN DENTAL THERAPY, ELECTRICITY, AND CARPENTRY. IN EACH CASE, HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS INVOLVED WAS VERY SMALL, PERHAPS AVERAGING THREE OR FOUR IN EACH CLASS. AT RESOLUTE, OUR BUS STOPPED A MILE AWAY FROM AN ESKIMO VILLAGE. WE WERE TOLD WE WOULD NOT BE VISITING IT BECAUSE "A HOUSE IS BEING MOVED AND IT MIGHT BLOCK THE BUS ROUTE." NO ONE EMERGED TO GREET US. AT TUKTOYAKTUK ON BEAUFORT SEAN SEVERAL MEMBERS OF GROUP REQUESTED THAT WE BE PERMITTED TO VISIT THE SCHOOL FOR ESKIMO CHILDREN, AND AFTER SPECIAL EFFORTS BY OUR TOUR LEADER (A RETIRED NWT OFFICIAL) WE WERE ALLOWED TO DO SO. STUDENTS RANGED FROM GRADES ONE THROUGH TWELVE, AND THEY NUMBERED ABOUT FIFTY, THOUGH THE SCHOOL COULD HANDLE THREE OR FOUR TIMES THAT NUMBER. EQUIPMENT WAS GOOD. FACULTY DID NOT INCLUDE ESKIMO PERSONNEL.

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5. CANADIAN PRESENCE IN NWT AND YUKON IS BASED ON VERY LIMITED MANPOWER. "YOU CAN'T PAY PEOPLE ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM STAY HERE," I WAS TOLD. ATTITUDES OF PERSONNEL WHO HAVE MADE CAREERS IN REGION TEND TO STRESS NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN MANNER RATHER SIMILAR TO THAT OF OFFICIALS ON OTHER CONTINENTS. I AM AWARE OF OUR OWN SHORTCOMINGS IN SIMILAR MATTERS DURING PAST YEARS, AND DO NOT WISH

TO POINT TOO ACCUSINGLY AT THE PRESENT CANADIAN EFFORT IN THAT VAST AND FORBIDDING LAND. I MERELY WISH TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IN MY OPINION IT IS INADEQUATE IN POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AREAS, AND THAT MORE THAN CANADIAN INTERESTS MAY BE DAMAGED EVENTUALLY UNLESS THERE IS IMPROVEMENT.

6. INADEQUACY OF MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS WAS REFLECTED IN VISIT OF POLISH RESEARCH SCHOONER "GEDANIA" TO RESOLUTE WITHOUT CANADIAN PERMISSION TO TRANSIT NORTHWEST PASSAGE. THERE, SHIP ACQUIRED THOUSAND GALLONS OF FUEL, TO ANNOYANCE OF DEFENSE OFFICIALS IN OTTAWA. WHEN SHIP DEPARTED RESOLUTE, CANADIANS UNABLE TO TRACK AND DID NOT LOCATE VESSEL UNTIL IT APPEARED THREE DAYS LATER AT THULE. THIS INCIDENT CAUSED CANCELLATION OF MILITARY BRIEFING SCHEDULED FOR DIPLOMATIC GROUP AT RESOLUTE, WHICH WAS PROBABLY A GOOD THING IN VIEW PRESENCE CZECH AMBASADOR AND OTHERS.

7. I BELIEVE MUCH OF OUR TRAVEL NEXT YEAR SHOULD BE IN THE MACKENZIE VALLEY AND OTHER AREAS WHERE UNREST IS REPORTED. WE WILL DISCUSS THIS WITH YOU AT CONSULAR MEETING HERE NEXT MONTH, AS OUR SCRUTINY OF THE AREA SHOULD BE DONE IN A MANNER WHICH WILL EVOKE CANADIAN COOPERATION AND FRANKNESS. I HAVE IN MIND PROBABILITY THAT DEPARTMENT WILL BE RECEIVING INQUIRIES BEFORE LONG FROM PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS ON THE DEGREE OF STABILITY AND GENERAL PROSPECTS ALONG PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE ROUTE. AS MATTERS STAND, I SUGGEST THAT WE DELAY COMMENT UNTIL WE HAVE EXAMINED SITUATION MORE CLOSELY.
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